



THE MESSENGER OF
ALLĀH ﷺ SAID:
“Be known to Allāh in
times of prosperity,
and He will know you in
times of adversity.”

**Allah Teâlâ'yı bolluk zamanında
tanırsın, O da seni darlık zamanında
tanır.**

Who is Arif?

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The word “Arif” is in Arabic and comes from the root "arefe" (to know). Accordingly, its meaning is “the one who knows”. The words which have the same meaning in English are sage, wise man, gnostic. It is a term used in Sufism and is used for Sufis who have reached the level of gnosis and the truth with their

spiritual experience. Arif's knowledge is called gnosis. In Sufism, gnosis indicates the knowledge of Allah and the nature of existence and events. In Sufism, a clear distinction has been made between the sage and the scholar. Arif is a person who learns and understands with the power of intuition and deep experience thanks to moral and spiritual purification. A scholar is a person who knows through the mind and intellectual activity. The opposite of scholar is ignorant, the opposite of arif is denier. A scholar is taken as an example, and guidance is attained with knowledge. Arif knows Allah by Allah, while a scholar knows Allah by evidence.

Sufis think that the arif is superior to the scholar in terms of trusting knowledge. The scholar thinks that his knowledge progresses as his scientific activities progress. However, as the gnosis of the sage increases, his astonishment increases and his astonishment opens knowledge. Finally, he realizes that he is incapable of perfect wisdom. This is the last level of wisdom he has reached. At this level, they think that they know nothing or that what they know is incomplete or flawed. For this reason, according to Beyazid-i Bistâmî, "a servant is wise to the extent that he is ignorant".

Nothing is kept secret to arif. In this respect, the arif is different from the believer. The believer looks with the light of Allah, and the arif sees with Allah. Because the believer is busy with the dhikr of Allah, and the arif is busy with Allah alone. In this respect, arif is Allah's speaking tongue and seeing eye. As a matter of fact, Cüneyd-i Baghdadi described the scholar as "God speaks from within, even though he is silent". According to Beyazid-i Bestâmî, there is no veil between the Arif and Allah. For this reason, the divine realm is a clear statement to arif. Arif cannot tell what he saw in the divine realm, even if he wanted to. However, some of them can tell them with poems by making use of the symbolism of the literary language.

In the Encyclopedia of Islam of the Türkiye Diyanet Foundation, the following is written about the arif:

"The rank of knowledge is gained through a life of suffering. Since arif knows goodness and blessing as the manifestation of the attribute of Jamal (beauty) of Allah, and evil and misfortune as the manifestation of the attribute of Calal (wrath) of Allah, he welcomes God's grace and wrath. He combined calm and movement, peace and worry at the highest level in himself. For this reason, Shibli

said, “Arif is like a spring. On the one hand, thunder, lightning flashes, on the other hand, flowers bloom and birds sing.”

He always does what needs to be done, leaving aside regretting the past and worrying about the future, he lives in the moment. So he is called as the son of time (ibnü'l – wakt). Just as pure water takes the shape and color of the container it is in, the arif remains the same in terms of its essence and nature, even if he changes according to time and place. In this respect, he is called the father of the time (ebu'l-wakt). He is not bound by time. His changing side is due to being with the people, his unchanging side is due to being with God. Since the relationship of the arif with people is similar to the relationship of Allah with His creatures, those who see him remember Allah.

According to Ibn Sînâ, the arif is a person who has turned to the holiness of the realm of Ceberrut, and the light of God is always born in himself. Arif has such secret and open states that those who understand these states exalt him and those who do not understand them dislike him.

In the history of Islamic culture, besides the biography books on Sufism, many books of legend containing especially the words, states and actions of the arifs were written.

What is Islamic Gnosis?

Gnosis is a divine quality. According to the people of Sufism, gnosis is a wide road. The science of gnosis is obtained by the discovery of the people of truth. In order to acquire this knowledge, it is necessary to enter that path with good deeds and taqwa. Sciences obtained with ideas and thoughts are never safe from doubt. There can be astonishment and bewilderment in the knowledge obtained through thought and experimentation. However, it cannot be guaranteed that the roads leading to it are free of defects, deficiencies and inadequacies. But gnosis is the opposite of that. There is never any doubt in it.

Allah Almighty has informed many things about Himself in the Qur'an. Even rational proofs and true ideas on these matters sometimes hesitate. However, there are also evidences confirming them and showing that it is necessary to believe in those things. In this case, what suits us is to imitate our Lord. It does not suit us to interpret those matters with our own minds. Instead of imitating

your mind about the matters that Allah has revealed, refer them to Allah, to the person who actually said those words. Then act as needed. Thus, you can reach the knowledge of Allah. This is the desired gnosis and true knowledge. Only in this way can you be arif.

"Falsehood shall not reach from before or from behind. It is revelation from the Wise, the One worthy of all praise." (Fussilat, 41/42)

The science of the knowing God is concerned with four things: God, the nafs, the world and the devil. Our Prophet (pbuh) also said that in order to know Allah, there is no other way but to know himself. *"Whoever knows himself, knows his Lord"*. Allah has made your self-knowledge a proof on your knowing Him. In other words, Allah has described you with the same attributes, just as He has described Himself with His Personality and Attributes, and has made you a caliph (vicegerent) of Himself on earth. In addition, He has made the fact that you always need Him to exist in every moment and in every situation you are in. For this reason, He has made it possible for the wise person to know God by knowing himself.

Allah Almighty says the following about the science of knowing God:

"We will show them Our signs both on the horizon and in their own selves so that it will be clear to them that the Qur'an is true." (Fussilat, 41/53)

According to this verse, Allah indicates that we must first send us to horizons outside of us, and then to our selves with which we are together, and examine them. If these two things do not come together, it will not be possible to know Allah. Positive scientists are only concerned with one side of it. They are only busy studying the outer world. However, it is necessary to know the inner world of man. If the structure of the inner world of man and the characteristics of the nafs are not known, knowing the truth cannot be fully realized. For this reason, the theories of positive science are always incomplete.

Our Prophet (pbuh) knew that the nafs contains all the truths of the world within itself. Therefore, he asked you to examine your self. Thus, he wanted you to reach the knowledge of knowing Allah in a shorter way and to be happy with it. Because our Prophet is actually very compassionate and very merciful towards believers (Repentance, 9/128). However, Allah Almighty directed you first to the horizons and then to your nafs. Because understanding his nafs would be much

easier after examining the horizons. Because you will see that the evidence we will obtain from the horizons is the same as the evidence we will obtain by looking at the nafs, so it will be possible to get rid of all kinds of doubts.

Allah has revealed to people how to look at the horizons in various verses:

"Have you not seen how your Lord lengthens the shadow? Had He pleased, He could have made them motionless. Then We made the sun a proof for them." (Al-Furqan, 25/45)

"Do they not look at how those camels were created? Do they not look at how the sky is raised? Do they not see how the mountains are set up? Don't they look at the ground, how is it spread?" (Al-Ghashiyah, 88/17-20)

"Have they not looked into the realms of the heavens and the earth all that God created and seen that the end of their time might be near? Now in what other word will they believe other than this Qur'an?" (Al-Araf, 7/185)

All of these verses ask people to look at the evidences of Allah. Because in these evidences there are proofs, signs and lessons for people who think, hear and understand, that is, scholars, believers, and those who have reason and heart.

"There are continents adjacent to each other on the face of the earth. There were vineyards, crops, forked and unforked date palms, all of which were irrigated with a single water. However, We favor one of the fruits over the other. There are certainly signs in this for a people who understand." (Thunder, 13/4)

Allah reveals that He created the creations in a wide variety of styles and forms. And this means an increase in the number of ways to reach the science of gnosis. When man turns to his nafs, God will be his senses; Only with Him will you know everything and with Him you will triumph. In fact, in this case, He will be the only one who knows Him and achieves victory with Him. Because you are His caliph. In fact, the door of knowledge about Allah is closed. This door is open only to Him. For this reason, the mind declares and considers Allah to be perfect in all respects and so the relationship between creation and the creator disappears in all respects. Allah gives us the following proof regarding this matter: *"There is nothing like Him"* (Al-Shura, 42/11). The mind accepts this situation only by believing, or by considering these provisions within the framework of its own comprehension, it goes to interpretation and thus accepts it. However, in this regard, it is necessary not to resort to interpretation and to leave the issues

about which he has no knowledge to Allah, and to refer them to His knowledge. This is the only way of salvation.

Those who are perfect among the people of Allah look at every being and every thing with such a keen eye that they immediately see the creation that Allah has given to that being. Thus, by thinking about the issues that Allah has revealed to His servants, they realize everything in their own way. Then they witness the realization of the phrase “He guided us to the straight path”. These people absolutely do not make mistakes in basic and side issues. In this way, they get the truth by hitting right in their interpretations.

Attributes of the Arif

We compile some information about Arif's attributes that famous sufis have stated in their books and explain them below.

- Arif is a person who has been moralized by Allah's morals.
- Arif is the one who does not put right or wrong, right or wrong into his heart. He is the one who does not see anyone other than Allah and does not ask to anyone other than Allah, so that the remembrance of Allah may cover him. Therefore, the arif is one who lives with his Lord at all times.
- Since Arif has made his own identity temporary and lost his existence, he has no definite state. He is incapable of praising his good deeds. He is always God fearing.
- Meeting with Allah is only through death. For this reason, the life of this world is something that prevents this meeting for the arif. For this reason, the arif stays away from the life of this world. His life is pure and simple. Although life may seem beautiful, it is actually a sorrow. But this sorrow does not appear in the soul of the sage. Because every created being is far from him. He is always in contact with God. There is no separation or reunion for the Arif to be with Allah. His being with God is alive. He has respect for Allah in his heart. His heart is a mirror for Allah. The world and the hereafter do not occupy him. He is terrified and amazed. He takes his works and deeds from Allah and turns to Allah to get them. Even if he is hungry and his body is naked, he does not feel sorry for anything. Because his eyes see no one but Allah.

- Arif's eyes are always full of tears. Although his eyes cry, his heart smiles, his heart is filled with joy. Their needs are never met. He cries for his nafs. On the other hand, the praise and grace of your Lord is abundant.

- He does not want to be busy with anyone other than Him, even for a moment. He knows his Lord again with his Lord. He speaks nothing but the word of God. He is the one who likes solitude to run away from people. He is the owner of poverty and disgrace. His gnosis is the birth of the truth on the secrets and the reaching of the lights. While praying, the spiritual doors are opened to him, and while he is sleeping, the spiritual doors are opened to him.

- Arif has gleams. Nothing can cloud his heart. Nothing grieves him. Sciences shine for him and he observes the strange situations of the unseen world with those lights. Arif can fit the things to himself, but the things cannot fit him to itself. He covers the things, but the things cannot cover him. He has a strong sense of pity.

- He is very merciful and gentle. He observes Allah's Attributes of Jalaal (Wrath) and Jamal (Beauty). Even though he doesn't request it, his affairs will be settled on his own. Its existence is a non-existent being. He is the owner of grief in grace, and the owner of grace in grief. He observes that Allah is omnipotent in everything.

- Arif is ecstatic with the love of God. He is mortal with Allah. He is with Him, and survives with Him. His heart is at ease, his inside is peaceful. His heart is a wide path to follow. He is the owner of evidence, discovery and witnessing. He likes to serve and is very polite to people. His understanding is sure and sharp. He knows what is behind without raising the curtains. He has a light. His light covers everything, erases everything, the rays of his light are burning. The sudden arrival of his manifestation is enthusiastic and exciting.

- Arif has completely isolated himself from masiva (everything other than Allah). He is always with God in his homeland. He is a devotee in peace. He is a resident in expedition. Without any means, he finds in himself many understandings that the words he learned from Allah cannot express. His soul is isolated from the naïveté of the nafs, it is blessed and holy. He is kind because of the things that are inside him. Severe sadness does not affect him at all.

- Arif considers the things in the universe through consultation. In this matter, he acts by discovery and he finds it. The sum of all goodness is for him. Both sides of him are equal. He has two hands. In the unseen and seen world, he takes and distributes with his two hands according to God's command. He does this as a guardian and caliph of Allah. He carries the entire burden of the country on his shoulders.

- The attribute of the arif originates from the divine homeland that the arifs witnessed from God in their own existence. This is a very precious witnessing. This is when the gnosis is achieved for the arif, the arif's being in harmony with God in his community. Arif's protection is very influential. He is effective without any registration in existence. His properties are not known to anyone else. He is not known by humans, jinn, angels and animals. In normal lives, there is no difference that can be distinguished from everyone else. He is the bearer of dhikr and the bearer of the Qur'an. His state is covered. He knows the will of God in His servants before they are concluded. He uses his own will with the will of God.

- Arif is innocent. He knows both the best and the ugliest of morals. He does not condemn the ignorant for his ignorance. When he gives something, he does not make anyone feel that he has given himself. He informs that person that it was sent from Allah. He says it's just a trust to be given to him.

- Arif knows the essence of all matters. Everything he hears is from Him, everything he sees is from Him. He knows it's all about pleasure. These things are not about science and news. He does not accuse anyone with sin. The greatness of the Arif is due to his despicable and smallness. If it is necessary to act with his knowledge, he acts, if not to act, then he does not act.

- The treasures of all works are with the Arif. The key to all works is in his hands. He excels at understanding the tiniest details of the most difficult phrases he encounters. All adjectives of perfection are for him.

- Arif is the organizer of orders and works that occur in the realm of existence. It stands still in the moment of earthquakes. Events do not shake him. There is no attribute in the Divine that the arif does not see it in himself. He can appear in any form he wishes, with the attribute of life.

- Arif has a divine power and capacity. But he doesn't want to prevail. The patronage of people cannot penetrate him, they do not affect him. He

undertakes his affairs with his own soul, not with his Lord. Because the wise man does not see his own soul so that his Lord will prevail over him.

- Arif uses words in their most appropriate places. If he sets foot in any place, that place becomes alive and comes to life. Because he stepped into that place with a spiritual life. If a thought comes to mind about any subject, it will become immediately. Whoever takes refuge in him will not be disappointed. He does good to those who do evil and those who do good. He appeals to God in every business.
- He neither takes revenge for himself nor for his Lord. However, if he receives a special order from Him, he acts on His order. If He does not command him, he forgives with God. He acts fairly in his judgment. He does not qualify as persecution. It collects all of the Shari'a sciences from their source. He gives things that will benefit, He does not give things that will harm.
- If the arif will punish, it is a cleanup. No darkness of cruelty will remain with the light of his justice. No darkness of ignorance can live next to the light of his knowledge. He declares all affairs in a divine language. It reveals the hidden side of all matters. He is persecuted, but because that's how it is appreciated, he behaves kindly and benignly. It is very severe to catch when he is judging someone. Because the arif is pure and not confused.

Some Famous Sufis' Comments on Arifs

- When Cüneyd-i Baghdadi was asked what gnosis was and who the arif was, he replied as follows:

“The color of water is the color of the bowl”, “Arif people take their deeds from Almighty Allah, do them by His command, and return to Him after completing their lives with these deeds. Even if he lives for a thousand years, he will continue to do these deeds unless he has an excuse that will prevent him from doing it.”

When Cüneyd-i Baghdadi was asked about the tawhid of distinguished scholars, he replied as follows:

“The tawhid of the arifs is to be like an inanimate being by abstracting from all will in the presence of God. In this state, the divine decree manifests itself on the servant. In the state of tawhid, the arif servant swims in the waves of the sea of

tawhid, both feeling mortal for himself and away from the claims and desires of people about him.”

“Arif is the one to whom God speaks of his secret, although he himself is silent.”

When Cüneyd-i Baghdadi was asked whether knowledgeable and saintly servants would commit bad deeds such as fornication, he bent his head, waited for a long time, thought, then raised his head and read the verse, "*Every work of Allah is ordained and decreed*" (Al-Ahzab, 33/38).

- Ebû'l-Hüseyin an-Nûrî said:

“Sufism is abandoning all desires of the nafs. Two things are very difficult to find in our time: a scholar who acts with his knowledge and arif who speaks the truth.”

- Zünnûn-i Mısrî

“To cooperate with the Arif is like to cooperate with Allah. Because the wise man has been moralized with the morals of Allah, he will tolerate you and treat you with kindness.”

- Yahya b. Muaz said:

“The ascetic will make you smell vinegar and mustard (he always criticizes you with his words, needles); the arif makes the musk smell of amber (always encourages you).”

“If an Arif abandons adab in the presence of Allah, the Knower, he will be destroyed along with those who are destroyed.”

“Even when Arif emigrates from the world, he cannot get enough of crying for himself and praising his Lord.”

- Ahmed b. Hanbal says:

“The asceticism (zühd) is of three types: The first is to abandon the haram. This is the zühd of the common people. The second is to abandon the surplus of halal. This is the zühd of upper classes. The third is to abandon everything that prevents a person from Allah. This is the asceticism of the arifs.

- Ibn Ata said:

“Arif persons have attained close to the amount of virtue they have obtained from taqwa. The essence of taqwa is to stay away from haram; This is done by

getting away from the nafs. That is to say, a person attains nearness to the extent that he moves away from himself.”

- Sahl b. Abdullah et-Tusteri said:

“Arif people are those who show great patience in asking for help from Allah in order to fulfill the duties assigned to them by Allah and in observing divine manners.”

- Hallaj Mansur said:

“The sign of the Arif is that he is not busy with this world and the Hereafter.”

- Beyazid-i Bestâmî said:

“The arifs attained gnosis by abandoning what was permissible for them in the world and by duly fulfilling the divine orders.”

“Arif flies like a bird on the way to Allah, while an ascetic travels on foot.”

- Yusuf b. Ali said:

“In order for arif to be a wise man, he should not be distracted from Allah for even a moment and occupy him with other things, even if he is given as much property as that of Solomon.”

- Shibli said:

“Arif only considers Him, pronounces only His word, and sees only Him as a guardian for himself.”

- Abu Suleiman et-Darani said:

“Allah bestows upon his wise servant what he does not grant to other servants even during prayer, while he is in bed.”

- Abu Turab en-Nahshebî said:

“Nothing spoils the purity of the sage, on the contrary, everything becomes pure with it.”

- Abu Osman al-Moorish:

“Arif is enlightened with the lights of knowledge and sees strange situations regarding the unseen.”

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